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It may be that more attention should have been given to the railways as mail carriers, but otherwise the inland and foreign transmission of mails has been thoroughly reviewed. The longest chapter, and one of the most interesting, deals with postage rates and the finances of the office, and includes a discussion of the franking privilege. Savings bank and assurance facilities, while of great importance as social experiments, are treated in a manner which is probably adequate in view of their importance to the post office. Other subordinate functions, such as the book post, the newspaper post, the parcels post, money orders, registry of letters, and special delivery, are also sufficiently described. Separate chapters are devoted to the telegraph and the telephone, and half a chapter deals with the relations between the government and its postal employees.

WILLIAM H. PRICE.

Yale University.

Combination among Railway Companies. By W. A. ROBERTSON.
(London: Constable and Company. 1912. Pp. 105. 1s. 6d.)

Seven different kinds of combination among the railway companies in England are described, *viz.*, amalgamation, joint-line, working-union, lease, working-agreement, running powers, pooling-agreement. The advantages and disadvantages of combination to the participating companies, outside companies, and to the public interests are considered. Outside of the blue-books, there has been surprisingly little discussion of this phase of English railway policy, and it is to be hoped that Mr. Robertson's lectures, which were delivered originally at the London School of Economics, will prove to be the precursor of a more detailed study. The present volume is marked by a certain roughness of style and by occasional obscurity of phrase, but, for all that, it makes agreeable reading. Intensive analysis is somewhat lacking, but probably a rather general treatment was called for by the conditions under which the lectures were delivered.

Mr. Robertson favors amalgamation, and argues that competition naturally tends to decline between railways which have attained a high degree of efficiency, associated with small profits. Such a condition, of course, tends to lead to combination, but, until combination is achieved, competition is hardly likely to become inert. When combination takes place, regional competition,

or competition of districts, as he terms it, may be relied upon to bring about progress. But Mr. Robertson fails to point out that the intensity of the stimulus will vary materially with the degree of economic parallelism between the districts of separate railway control.

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A History of Inland Transport and Communication in England.

By EDWIN A. PRATT. (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. 1912. Pp. x, 532. \$2.00.)

Mr. Pratt's book is the introductory volume of an English series on "National Industries," under the general editorship of Mr. Henry Higgs. American students of the industrial economy will look forward with pleasurable anticipation to the various volumes that are to appear under Mr. Higgs' expert guidance, especially as the announcements thus far made promise contributions from the younger English economists, whose names are as yet not so familiar here as among our colleagues in England.

In his excursion into history, a somewhat novel field for Mr. Pratt, he has aimed to present to his readers a connected account of the development of internal communication in England from the primitive facilities of the early tin-trading Briton to the motor-omnibuses, railless trams and aeroplanes of the *fin-de-siècle* traveler. A noteworthy proportion of the volume, nearly a fourth, is devoted to roads; between two fifths and a half to railways; and the remainder to rivers, canals, motor conveyance, etc. A list of authorities, extending over more than seven pages, is appended. The latter part of the title of the book would lead one to infer that communication by post, telegraph, and telephone was included, but this is not so.

Mr. Pratt is an old hand at writing for the public, and the present volume lacks neither in lucidity nor in interest. Quotations might, with advantage, have been used more sparingly, but, at any rate, they are apropos; altogether the book is well designed to familiarize the general reader, in agreeable fashion, with the progress of transportation facilities in England. Footnotes are practically dispensed with, and even references are inserted parenthetically in the body of the text—the latter surely a questionable device. The bibliography of authorities consulted is an interesting one, though one wonders why the parliamentary papers